Amendments the Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended) A proxy within a network for use in facilitating access with a distributed network, the apparatus comprising:

a plurality of persistent connections between the proxy and one or more servers in the network wherein the persistent connections is an active and established connection between the proxy and the server; and

a controller that controls communications over the persistent connections;

communication ports coupled with the persistent connections, where at least one of the communication ports receive requests for objects from users wherein the objects are from the one or more servers;

a load tracker to monitor a number of requests sent over the persistent connection to the server for which the requested objects have not yet been received, and

wherein the controller communicates over the persistent connections and allocates the requests to the plurality of persistent connections for transmission to the one or more servers, receives the requested objects over the plurality of persistent connections, and ~~orders~~ delivery of the objects received from the one or more serves to the users in an order and wherein the controller deciding, for each request sent by a user for an object form the server, to send the request to the server over a persistent connection for the number is lowest and assigning the order in which the requested objects are received from the server are delivered to the users such that when the first request is received from a first user before a second request from the first user and the second requested object is received from the server before the first requested object is received, the first requested object is assigned to be delivered to the user before the second requested object is assigned to be delivered.

2.   (Currently Amended) The proxy of claim 1, wherein the controller dynamically adjusts the number of persistent connections between the ~~apparatus~~ proxy and ~~a first~~ the server ~~of the one or more servers in the network~~ based on the number of requests monitored by the load tracker.

3. (Previously Amended) The proxy of claim 2, further comprising:

an idle timer coupled with the controller, wherein the controller activates the idle timer when a first persistent connection becomes idle, and terminates the first persistent connection when a predefined time period expires before a request for an object is allocated over the first persistent connections.

4. (Previously Amended) The proxy of claim 2, wherein the controller activates an additional persistent connection when an additional request is received for a second server of the one or more servers and one or more persistent connections are not idle, and allocates the additional request to the additional persistent connection for transmission to the second server.

5. (Previously Amended) The proxy of claim 2, wherein more than one persistent connection between the apparatus and a third server of the one or more servers exists, and the controller allocates the requests for the third server to one or more persistent connections persistent connections to the third server such that the requests are transmitted to the third server over the persistent connections having lightest loads.

6. (Previously Amended) The proxy of claim 1, further comprising:

a cache coupled with the communication ports, wherein a first received object is stored in the cache when a first request associated with the first object has a lower priority than a second request for a second object that has not been received.

7. (Currently Amended) The proxy of claim 1, ~~further comprising:~~

~~a~~ wherein the load tracker being coupled with at least one of the communication ports, where the load tracker identifies which of the plurality of persistent connections to a fourth server has a lightest load when more than one persistent connection exists between the apparatus and the fourth server, wherein the controller communicates with the load tracker and allocates a request for transmission to the fourth server over a persistent connection having the lightest load according to the load tracker.

8.   (Previously Amended) The proxy of claim 1, wherein the controller tracks priorities of the received requests and delivers the objects to the requesting user in the order of the priority.

9.   (Currently Amended) A system for use in communicating data with devices, the system comprising:

a proxy comprising:

a controller providing at least some control of the proxy; and

a memory coupled with the controller, the memory comprises a cache that stores data;

a plurality of persistent connections coupled with the proxy, where the plurality of persistent connections are connections between the proxy and ~~one or more servers~~ a server over a distributed network that are activated and maintained by the proxy, and

a load tracker coupled with the controller, wherein the load tracker provides information to the controller on the load on the persistent connections of a number of requests sent over the persistent connections to the server for which requested objects have not yet been received from the server;

wherein each request received by the proxy for an object on the server is transmitted to the server over a persistent connection for which the number is the lowest and an order in which the requested objected received from the server are delivered a user such that whenever a first request is received by the proxy from a user before a second request from the user and the second requested object is received by the proxy from the server before the first requested object, the first requested object is delivered to the first user before the second requested object.

10.   (Currently Amended) The system of claim 9, wherein the proxy further comprises:

a persistent connection controller coupled with an idle timer, wherein the idle timer determines a period of time for which a first persistent connection to ~~a first server of the one or more servers~~ the server is idle, and the persistent connection controller

releases the first persistent connection when the first persistent connection is idle for a predefined period of time.

11.   (Previously Amended) The system of claim 9, wherein the proxy further comprises a persistent connection controller coupled with the plurality of persistent connections such that when an additional request is received for an object on a second server to which there is one or more persistent connections, the persistent connection controller determines whether one or more of the persistent connections to the second server is idle and activates an additional persistent connection to the second server when no existing persistent connections to the second server are idle.

12.   (Previously Amended) The system of claim 9, wherein the proxy further comprises:
       an object identification evaluator coupled with the controller, the object identification evaluator identifies a user associated with a received object and a priority associated with the object; and
       a priority-based object router coupled with the object identification evaluator, where the object router routes the received object to the user as identified by the object identification evaluator based on the priority of the object as identified by the objection identification evaluator.

13.   (Currently Amended) A method for use in providing client devices with access to a distributed network, the method comprising:
       establishing a plurality of persistent connections between a proxy and a first server over a distributed network;
       maintaining the plurality of persistent connections as active;
       receiving a plurality of requests from a client device for objects on the first server;
       communicating the plurality of requests over the plurality of persistent connections wherein for each persistent connection a number of request sent over the persistent connections to the server is monitored and deciding for each request sent by a

client device for an object from the server to communicate the request to the server over a persistent connection for which the number of requests is lowest;

determining an order in which the requested objects received from the server are delivered to the client devices such that when a first request is received from a client device by the proxy before a second request is received from the client device and the second requested object is received from the server to the proxy before the first requested object, the proxy delivers the first requested object to the client device before delivering the second requested object to the client device; and

adjusting a number of persistent connections that are maintained as active to the first server.

14-15.   (Cancelled)

16.   (Previously Amended) The method of claim 13, further comprising:

monitoring a first persistent connection of the plurality of persistent connections; and

releasing the first persistent connection when the first persistent connection is idle for a predefined period of time.

17.   (Previously Amended) The method of claim 13, further comprising:

receiving an additional request for an object on the first server;

determining loading on each of the existing persistent connections to the first server when there are one or more persistent connections to the first server;

determining when existing persistent connections to the first server are loaded beyond a threshold limit when receiving the additional request

activating an additional persistent connection all of the existing persistent connections are loaded beyond a threshold limit; and

communicating the additional request to the first server over the additional persistent connection.

18.   (Previously Amended) The method of claim 13, further comprising:

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receiving a first object from the first server;

determining that a third request is associated with the received first object; and

caching the first object when there is a fourth request for an object on the first server having a higher priority than the third request such that a second object that is associated with the fourth request has not been received from the first server and delivering the first object with cached objects associated with requests having a lower priority than the third request when there are no requests with higher priority than the third request for which the objects have not been received.

19.   (Previously Amended) The method of claim 13, further comprising:

receiving a third request for an object on the first server when one or more persistent connections are available to the first server;

determining when one or more of the plurality of active persistent connections is to the first server idle; and

communicating the third request to the first server over an idle persistent connection when one or more of the plurality of active persistent connections is idle.

20.   (Previously Amended) The method of claim 13, further comprising:

receiving an additional request for an object on the first server when one or more persistent connections exist to the first server;

determining which of the one or more of plurality of persistent connections has the lightest load; and

communicating the additional request to the first server over the persistent connection that has been determined to have with the lightest load.